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Crowfeather's Sorrow

We sat in a short moment of silence, despite Leafpool's shocked, ragged breaths when she almost fell off the cliff. I couldn't take it anymore. I wanted to tell her. I took in a deep breath, and looked her determinedly in her eyes. She looked as determined as I was, and I swallowed the lump in my throat. "You walk in my dreams, Leafpool," I muttered softly. My eyes were sincere, true of my word. "I-I shocked myself for loving another cat so soon after Feathertail's death, but I love you, Leafpool."

Crowfeather's love for Feathertail was strong. He loved her deeply, until a terrible tragedy happened, leaving Crowfeather heartbroken and traumatised as he thought it was his fault. That was, until he met a calm, understanding medicine cat called Leafpool-who fixed his broken heart. ♡

Chapter 1

I watched in horror as Feathertail laid blows after blows on Sharptooth as he started to corner her up the mountain. He was nearly twice her size, and her attacks seemed like they didn't do him much harm. She was covered in scratches and bite marks, but she still had a tenacious look in her eyes no matter how much trouble she seemed to have. I wanted to run out there and help her, but the stupid, arrogant furball Brambleclaw wouldn't let me.

I looked around at the other cats. Tawnypelt was looking worried for her friend, and Brambleclaw was trying to hold Squirrelpaw back from joining the fight, while Stormfur was looking at the scene in horror and worry. The Tribe cats were cheering Feathertail on; finally glad that today would finally be the end of Sharptooth. I scowled. If only they knew how she had risked her life for them. If only they could have the same determination as her, then they could've still lived themselves.

The mountain was starting to get steeper and steeper every pawstep Feathertail was going. She looked kind of scared, as Sharptooth was nearing her. Feathertail then looked down, and gave me a reassuring look in her eyes. However, when she did so, she didn't notice there was a cut in the mountain, and tripped over, giving an audible yelp of surprise. My stomach clenched in fear for her. Sharptooth was going to use this chance to land the final blow.

The ferocious lion leaped into the air, letting out a fearsome growl. His long claws were nearing Feathertail at every passing second. Feathertail was staring up in horror, paralyzed in fear. I wanted to yowl at her to do something, but my throat was dry in nervousness. Right before the moment that he was going to sink his claws into her throat, she jumped up, her pelt flashing silver in the sunlight.

Feathertail landed on a huge, pointy rock right above his head. She dug her claws in it to steady herself, and I could make out a few cracks in the rock. Sharptooth was waiting below with his claws unsheathed, ready to attack. The pointy rock made one final crack that echoed around the Tribe's camp, and dislodged as they both gave way.

Sharptooth was frozen with shock and fear, and she used this as her chance. The sharp end of the rock sliced through Sharptooth's heart, impaling and killing him instantly. Still holding onto the rock, Feathertail and him both tumbled down the mountain, the sharp rocks digging into their fur.

I watched helplessly as Feathertail's body dropped with a loud "thump" and Sharptooth's body continued tumbling down the mountain, where he finally found his final resting place. I just stood there, looking at Feathertail's motionless body and the blood pouring out of her wounds.

"Feathertail!" I began to run to her. She couldn't be dead yet. She can't be. She had promised me that she would survive!

"Crowpaw!" Brambleclaw blocked my way. "I know you're worried, but-!"

"This is not the time to stop!" I hissed. He looked at me with a shocked expression. "Her life could be at risk right now! We have to save her!" With that, I pushed past him and ran to Feathertail.

"Wake up!" I yowled. "You can't die now! Wake up!" My heart was thumping wildly with fear as I prodded her gently with a paw.

It seemed like a miracle, moments later when she coughed up blood and opened her eyes. They were cloudy and distant, looking up at the sky.

"Feathertail!" I exclaimed in relief.

"C-Crowpaw," she mumbled. "I'm sorry... But I don't think I'll make it..."

It took the shock to register when I finally realized what she meant. "No! You can't die now! You promised!" I wailed.

She looked up at me and purred. "I care for you, deeply, Crowpaw. I am sorry that I won't make it and come home with you all, but I will always be watching over you from StarClan. And..." Her eyes looked sad. "Tell Stormfur... To live on... For my sake." Her breathing was getting fainter. "I loved you, Crowpaw. Don't you forget that..." She gasped as she took her final breath, and then her body was still.

"No! You shouldn't have died protecting us, Feathertail! Why didn't you

let me die, instead?!" I wailed into the sky with sadness and grief. It was my fault that she died. I felt a wave of guilt as I realized that I had failed to protect her.

I felt a tail on my shoulder, and I looked next to me to see Brambleclaw giving me a reassuring, but sad look as he also grieved for the brave she-cat. Squirrelpaw pressed her nose into Feathertail's fur, in respect for her honor and bravery. Tawnypelt was trying to comfort Stormfur as he also wailed in grief for his sister. His tail was drooped down in sadness, and he was shaking uncontrollably.

The Tribe cats were celebrating that Sharptooth was now gone, and that he wouldn't bother them anymore.

"The silver cat has come and saved us all!" someone cheered. "We shall live in peace forever!"

I growled. Didn't they have any dignity for the RiverClan Warrior? Can't they see how she had died protecting them? Those ungrateful cats. It was their faults that led Feathertail here; it was them who were celebrating right now about her death.

"Hey," Tawnypelt seemed to sense my distress. She laid her tail on my shoulder. "It wasn't their faults that Feathertail died. Can't you see that she saved them all? A life is very important to every cat. They live their own paths, and each has their own destinies. Without Feathertail, they wouldn't live up to what they were destined for, right?" She said softly.

I sighed. I hated to admit it, but she was right. Fortunately, I could still hear the wind whispering,"Crowpaw" as it blew through my fur. That day, I realized that some things were not meant to be controlled and that this mistake would haunt me forever.

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I grumbled as I felt a sharp paw prodding my side. "Crowpaw! Wake up! Tallstar wants to see you for something!" I decided to ignore the voice. "Crowpaw!" This time their voice was right in my ear, and I winced. *Since when did I fall asleep?*

I groaned in annoyance that they ruined my peaceful mood, and I

opened my eyes to see Onewhisker looming over me. He looked amused. "Welcome back. You've been sleeping for a while," he muttered. To say I was shocked was an understatement. He looked so think that I could see the bones through his pelt. It was like he had no more prey left to hunt.

"Is this really neccessary?" I asked annoyed and tiredly. To be honest, I couldn't sleep well. The events from the Tribe kept haunting my dreams. *I'll go on a hunt later, and rest while I'm at it.* I reminded myself. I then scowled at Onewhisker. "It was a long trip, and I just got back last night." I muttered grumpily.

"Well, I'm glad to see you're back-and healthy, anyways, no matter how grumpy you still are." He laughed. His ear suddenly twitched as he remembered something. "Oh yeah, meet Tallstar in his den. He says he has something important to tell you." Onewhisker had a knowing look in his eyes. "And hurry up while you're at it. Tallstar says it's urgent." He started to limp out of the den. *Since when was his leg injured?*

I sighed. *Something seemed off. Why does Onewhisker look so starved? What did I miss when I was gone?* Still thinking, I started to stretch and groom my fur. I must ask Tallstar about it when I have the chance.

When I was sure I looked presentable, I exited the den and stopped in my tracks at what I saw. Every cat looked thin and starved, and I could detect the faint smell of Two-Leg monsters nearby. The whole camp was in shreds with dug up ground and fallen trees, and they were not as loud as their usual selves. I could smell the faint scent of death in the air, and noticed that they all looked deceased. Some cats were grieving, while Barkface was struggling to treat some cats. I was the only one strong and healthy enough. I felt a pang of anger at myself in my stomach. *If only I didn't leave, none of this would've happened. But wouldn't it have been the same if I stayed?* I wondered. After a moment, I managed to drag myself to Tallstar's den in guilt.

Once I was outside of his den, I waited for Tallstar to come out. "Tallstar? You said you needed me for something?" I asked. *I hoped he isn't too deceased like everyone else. Otherwise I would blame myself even more. I* was *the one responsible for leaving without telling them,*

after all. I reminded myself.

There was rustling inside, and Tallstar emerged from his den. "There you are. I've been looking for you." He said. My eyes widened as I saw how unhealthy he looked. He looked far worse than the rest of the clan. *Wasn't he trying to take care of himself too? He was WindClan's leader. We need him more than anything right now in this mess.*

"What-What happened when I was gone?" I demanded. *I feel so guilty and angry...*

He looked at me with a calm expression. "I see you've come back." He observed.

"What happened to the camp?" I demanded again. I needed answers.

He looked at me with his same expression. "The Two-Legs have decided to tear down the forest and build a new Thunderpath.

This wave of anger was unlike any other emotion I felt. *To know they were suffering in my absense...*

He probably noticed my tense posture; as he laid his tail on my shoulder. "None of this is your fault." He reassured.

Not my fault? Those words had irony in them. My fault was just as big as their suffering! I wanted to yowl those words out loud, but I restrained myself from doing so. "You could've told me when I got back." I muttered softly.

"But you needed some rest after those many days of traveling." He replied. He paused for a moment. "Besides, I had wanted to tell you something."

My head perked up in interest. "Really? What is it?" I questioned.

"I think it is time for you to receive your Warrior name."

"What?" I asked in shock. After many Moons of dreaming of my ceremony, today was the day that I finally get to receive my Warrior name! I felt pride in myself. But that wasn't enough to

replace the guilt in my heart.

"You have shown skill in the past Moons, and was brave to go out to the mountains to save the Tribe while knowing the risks."

"H-How did you...?"

His ears twitched. "I heard from the other clans."

After a moment of silence, he continued. "Mudclaw and I have decided that it was time for your naming ceremony after you returned." He paused. "However,"

I swallowed. *Did I do something wrong to make him change his mind?*

His eyes softened. "Don't worry, Crowpaw." He reassured me. "You did nothing wrong. I just felt like you wanted to have a true ceremony in another place where you are true to your heart."

My eyes widened. *Could he be talking about...?*

"This isn't neccessarily your true naming ceremony," he continued. "But it will be for now. Just live the life of a normal Warrior until *that moment* comes." He began to walk to the Highledge.

"Wait!" I called. *What am I doing?*

He turned around. "Yes?" He questioned.

"Can my Warrior name be Crowfeather?" I asked. "Feathertail had risked her life trying to save the Tribe, and I want my Warrior name to be in her honor."

He looked shocked for a moment before his usual calm gaze returned. "I understand." He replied. "She was a noble Warrior with courage, and that would always be remembered in her honor."

Tallstar continued to walk to the Highledge. "Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey gather beneath the highledge." He yowled.

Immediately, every cat gathered below, curious as to what the wise leader was going to say, despite their deceased bodies. Onewhisker

gave me a knowing stare, and I just looked away in guilt. Once Tallstar was sure he had everyone's attention, he continued. "Crowpaw, you may step forward."

My eyes widened as I realized that this was happening right now. *I was going to receive my Warrior name*! My stomach twisted with a nervous and excited feeling.

As I stood on the side of him, I looked down at every cat, and they all looked shocked and relieved at my return. My gaze flickered to where my mother, Ashfoot sat. She looked up at me with a proud expression, and I could detect a faint hint of relief in her eyes too. I turned to my mentor, Mudclaw. Even though he had his usual grumpy scowl on his face, he still held a small glimmer of pride in his eyes, too.

"I, Tallstar, leader of WindClan, call upon my Warrior ancestors to look down upon this apprentice. He has trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend him as a Warrior in his turn." Tallstar turned to me. "Crowpaw, do you promise to uphold the Warrior code and defend this clan, even at the cost of your life?" He asked.

My throat felt dry with nerves. "I do." I stuttered.

"Then by the powers of StarClan I give you your Warrior name. Crowpaw, from now on, you will be known as Crowfeather. WindClan welcomes you as a full Warrior."

"Crowfeather! Crowfeather! Crowfeather!" The clan cheered for me, lightening the depressing atmosphere.

Crowfeather. I tested it out. To be honest, I chose it because my grief for Feathertail was still too great. I still loved her too much to let her go. I figured that if my name was in honor of her, I would feel that she's still here with me, even though she's not. I looked up at the sky as I grovelled in everyone's cheers. I knew she was watching me from StarClan with a proud look on her face. But right now, at this moment, I knew that this was enough. I was glad to be back with my clan.

Chapter 2

Pride. That was what I felt when I was finally a Warrior. Every cat had congratulated me as I walked past to start my vigil as a new Warrior. *I finally received my Warrior name!* My eyes shined with excitement. *I had dreamed of this moment ever since I was a kit being told stories of each Warrior's naming ceremony.* I laughed softly. *I had always been a big dreamer. If Feathertail was here right now, she would call me an "obnoxious fur-ball" for my constant bragging.* She was probably the only one who could get away with that.

While I was reminiscing in my thoughts as I looked down at my paws, I didn't notice I bumped into someone. "S-Sorry..." I muttered. *How clumsy of me...* I thought. I then realized something really important. *What was I doing here again....? Oh yeah, the vigil... I have to start it soon... 'You're so dense-headed.'* Feathertail would say.

The cat suddenly stopped in their tracks forcefully, causing me to bump my head again. I winced. *Honestly... I have to get a move-on soon or I'll be late for the Warrior's vigil.*

Before I could continue walking, they winces as they sat down on their haunches and coughed from the effort. After a moment of violent coughs, they then said,"Crowfeather," in a raspy, yet gruff voice. That voice was layered with violent trembles and coughs along with exhaustion.

After a moment of silence, she managed to calm down her coughing. "Crowfeather." Ashfoot repeated in a more commanding tone. "Look at me. Where have you been? You have left your duties as a Warrior and left the clan to suffer."

Her words no longer had the comforting tone that I remembered as a kit. Instead, they were sharp and clipped, each harsh tone taking a blow to my heart. *Just what had changed...?* I clenched my jaw. Matching my tone like hers, I looked her straight in the eyes. "Ashfoot." Her gaze made mine waver a bit, leaving me want to flinch, but I managed to calm myself down.

My mother just continued staring at me with her emotionless, dark eyes. Eyes that used to hold so much pride and warmth. We sat there, staring at each other with matching emotionless expressions, until Ashfoot decided to break the silence in interrogance.

"You have left the clan for many days, without a single word. And in your absense, you have left the clan-and myself to fend for ourselves. Were you planning to do this the whole time? Were you hoping to create less work for yourself?"

"No!" I immediately yelped. "You don't know... About what *really* happened..." I felt hollow remembering the journey to the Tribe.

"...It's because of *Feathertail,* isn't it?" She muttered softly, spitting out Feathertail's name like it was a disgrace.

"W-What?" I spluttered in surprise. Out of all things, I couldn't believe she would bring up this topic of the heroic beautiful silver tabby.

She snapped her head at me. "You loved her, didn't you? You broke the Warrior Code so that you could spend your time with her while you leave the rest of the clan to fend for themselves.."

I believed that her words held the truth in them. I knew that I was being selfish wanting to leave the clan and spend each and every second of the day staying by her side. But somehow, there was always that one thing that convinced me to stay, even if I broke the Warrior Code. *Love*. I had finally found someone who I could feel content and loved by, that I couldn't just walk away. These feelings just made me more selfish that I almost completely forgot my dedication to the clan. I knew I also felt more important than the times in my past. *But why didn't I walk away if I still knew?* I thought.

"Your selfish feelings towards her has caused you to change." She said. She looked bitter. "Maybe she was supposed to die anyways."

Those words kept haunting me by echoing in my mind. *She was supposed to die anyways.* I began to boil with rage. I felt powerful surges of anger rush through me. *Why? Why is she brushing her death aside like a leaf? Why did she say that about Feathertail when she knew*

nothing about her? Even if she did, she doesn't have the option of blaming everything on her!

"Well, you're wrong..." I muttered lowly. "Stop acting like you know everything when you actually don't!" I snapped.

"Crowpaw..." She growled in a warning tone.

I'm such a mouse-brain.. I thought as I realized what I said. "Um, I'd like to continue, but I'd better get going for the Warrior's vigil..."

Getting up to my paws, I hurriedly walked away, eager to get out of the tense anger around us.

I'm sorry...

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"What took you so long?" Onewhisker asked. He laughed. Don't think that you can do anything as a newly named Warrior. You still have to do your duties."

I sighed. "It's nothing, really. I just had to...talk with someone." I said hesitantly. *More like argue with someone.* I added silently in my mind.

Onewhisker looked suspicious for a moment, and I was beginning to grow hot with nervousness. "Well, I guess you can start your vigil now." He commented after a long period of silence. I thanked him inwardly for dropping the subject. Onewhisker opened his jaws in a loud yawn. "Well, good luck. And *good night*!" He made sure to emphasize those last words.

I scowled at him. I was tired from the events today. No need to make me feel worse.

He just laughed as he gave my shoulder an encouraging pat with his tail as he walked past. *He looks surprisingly normally healthy in this time of crisis...*

My eyes glowed in excitement after I saw he went into the Deputy's den. *This would be my first time guarding the camp as a new Warrior!*

And by myself too! I wallowed in the cool gust of the night air and closed my eyes. *It really is great to be back home. Everyone still seems bright and cheerful, even though the camp has been going through so much destruction and trouble.* I noted. I clenched my jaw. *The Two-Legs have put my clan into so much adversity that I have not helped them with... I will never forgive them for destroying the camp. That is why I will help my clan as much as I can using my strength as a new Warrior. Someday, they will pay.*

I looked up at the moon, its light illuminating my blue eyes. *StarClan, please give me the tenacity and determination to help my clan.* I began saying my many prayers to StarClan about my clan, hoping to take that large burden of guilt and regret off my chest.

I was so concentrated on my wishes to the moon, that I didn't notice another cat was beside me. "Hello, Crowfeather," a voice muttered in my ear, causing shivers up my spine. *Feathertail?! No. I'm possibly just being a mouse-brain...*

I nearly jumped out of my pelt and turned around to attack the intruder when I realized it was not the silver she-cat, but was stopped when I realized the familiar brown tom in her place.

"It's me, Onewhisker." He hissed in a soft whisper. I inwardly growled, digging my claws in the dirt to prevent myself from clawing his ears off and giving him a piece of my mind. *What does he want* again*?*

I growled in exasperation at his tactics. "Why'd you do that? Go back to the Deputy's Den!" I scowled.

I was getting more annoyed with him when he twitched his whiskers in amusement. "Scared, Crowfeather?" He meowed in a teasing tone.

"No!"

"If you say so," Onewhisker's playful and teasing demeanor suddenly changed to a more serious one. "But that's not what I came here for. This is serious business."

I immediately felt curious at his change of tone. Especially since he was never serious in the first place.

"Well... To begin with, I've been hearing gossip around the clan." He whispered as he looked cautiously around the camp for any eavesdropping cats nearby. "They've been wondering where you were these past days. Most of them think you've disappeared so you can take a break from your Apprentice duties." I was about to object, but he carried on. "Well, I totally get what you mean, though." He meowed. *This is so unrelated to the topic right now*. I thought with a blank look. "I hated cleaning the Elder's den as a kit," he wrinkled his nose from the memories. "I had wished the elders would clean it themselves, so one day I "accidentally" forgot to give them dry moss and-!"

I sighed. "That was *not* why I was gone." I declared. *For a "serious conversation," this is not serious at all...* "I'm surprised you're deputy when you're so disrespectful..." I muttered afterwards.

"I heard that!" He exclaimed, clearly offended.

"You were meant to..." I deadpanned. *Dense furball... Sometimes I wonder how I can still stand this idiot as deputy.*

"Anyways, where did you go? And what happened?" He continued interrogating me, not minding I just openly insulted him.

I looked down at my paws and sighed. "Well, it all began when we got signs from StarClan..." I began.

And for the rest of the night, I told Onewhisker the whole story of the trip to the Tribe of Rushing Water.

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I opened my jaws in a loud yawn. I could *finally* get some sleep after the vigil and Onewhisker's constant nagging. My body was heavy with exhaustion, and I realized that I hadn't gotten enough rest since the trip to find Midnight. However, that wasn't the only reason why I felt so tired.

After my vigil, I had asked Onewhisker if I could go out and hunt

for the clan. With much reluctance, he surprisingly agreed. And so on, for the rest of the morning and afternoon, I walked for many tree-lengths around WindClan's territory searching for any prey, but to no avail. The stench of Twoleg monsters was putrid; stinging my nose whenever I took a deep breath, and blocking out the scent of any oncoming prey. How the clan had managed to hunt in this state for even a few days was far beyond my powers of knowledge.

It seemed like a miracle from StarClan when I finally spotted some rabbits near WindClan's border that overshadowed ThunderClan's. They were three, plump rabbits munching on some fresh grass the Twoleg Monsters hadn't demolished yet. My mouth watered and my stomach growled, but I knew the clan had to be fed first.

I began to slowly stalk a white rabbit facing away from me. I crept low to the ground, bringing each paw softly and slowly down as I advanced. When I thought I was close enough, I pounced on it, watching as it flailed in panic. I sunk my teeth in its throat quickly, before sinking my claws in a spotted rabbit's throat next to it before it could get away. Unfortunately, the third one-a light brown rabbit-managed to get away by crossing into ThunderClan's territory before I could do anything.

I looked down at my catches proudly, before dragging them under a bush and looking for more prey. Almost immediately, I spotted a frail mouse nibbling on a seed nearby, the only source of food it could find. *I guess this would do for now.* I thought. I easily and smoothly jumped the small distance to the mouse, and sunk my teeth in its small neck.

After I went back to the bush with my other two catches, I began making my way back to the camp, ignoring the protesting growls of my stomach. It seemed like ages before I got there, watching as everyone made their way over to me, looking glad and shocked at my large catch.

"Good job, Crowfeather." Tornear purred. "You sure helped the clan," he said proudly. "Here, eat your fill. You deserved it, after all." He nodded towards the rabbits.

"Uh, no thanks." I replied. "I'm not very hungry right now." I lied,

feeling the rumble of my stomach. Right now feeding the clan was more important than my hunger.

"If you say so," he sighed. "Go get some sleep. You deserve it."

"I know," I mewed tiredly.

I started to feel drowsy while I was recalling the previous events of today. I laid my head on my paws, and immediately fell into a dreamless sleep. Or so I thought. My mind had some different ideas.

I felt a strong course of wind blow through my fur. I scowled. Did the Warriors' Den get destroyed by the Twolegs too? That thought had occurred to me at first, but I believed it wasn't possible. I slowly, yet cautiously opened my eyes and was shocked that I was standing in a peaceful, grassy clearing. This was so unlike WindClan's territory right now. The clearing seemed to go on for many tree-lengths over hills in its path, and I could make out the pelts of rabbits and other prey from far away.

Was this StarClan? And most importantly, where am I?

I began looking around in panic, before trying to calm myself down. This was only a dream. It seemed like I was the only one here, until I saw a faint outline of a large... Badger? As it got closer, I realized that the large shape was a badger after all. I unsheathed my claws, preparing to attack. "Get any closer, and I'll claw your snout off!" I hissed in warning.

Surprisingly, the badger stopped in its tracks and made no sign of attacking. "I harm you not," she said.

My eyes widened. "I-I understand you..." I said in shock. This badger was like no other. I could actually understand her words.

Her eyes were calm. "I am Midnight," she said. Her words had a faint accent to them. "I come with message. You are Crowfeather, no?"

"Y-Yes, I am..." I muttered.

She was silent for a moment, deciding what to say. "The clans in danger now, Crowfeather. Move to new land, or clans disappear forever."

"Because of the Twolegs, right?" I asked. I dug my claws into the ground angrily as I said that.

She nodded. "As you see, this is WindClan new territory." She pointed her snout to the tree lengths of hills. Midnight looked up at the sky. "I must leave soon. Tell TallStar the message." She said gruffly. "Meet other leaders. Make your decision."

"But what are you say-!" I began, but Midnight's starry outline began to fade.

"Tell TallStar and clan message!" She reminded me. "Good-bye, Crowfeather." I could feel myself disappearing from the clearing, too. "Wait!" I yowled. "What do you-!"

Before I could comprehend what happened, my eyes opened in panic and were met with the bright sun overhead.

Chapter 3

I winced as the bright sun burned my eyes. My heart was still beating uncomfortably fast against my chest, and I still had the aforementioned memories of my dream. *Tell TallStar and clan message.* Midnight had said. I pondered about the rest of the things that she had told me. *Did she come to tell TallStar in his dream, too?*

I sat up and began to groom my fur. I could still feel the wind blowing through my fur from my dream. My stomach growled in protest, and I felt hungrier than before. *The clan must be fed first.* I thought. Unfortunately, no matter how hungry I was, I knew that was true. I padded out of the Warriors' Den and saw cats bustling around doing their duties like usual. However, I could make out the sharp bones of their ribs through their pelts. I looked away. Right now, I had to tell TallStar Midnight's sign.

I began to make my way towards his den. For some reason, I felt incredibly nervous. *Probably cause he wouldn't believe the fact that I talked to a friendly badger and got away unscathed.* I added as an afterthought. But I shouldn't get too worked up over it.

Right when I was about to enter TallStar's den, Barkface, WindClan's medicine came out. He looked shocked to see me, along with an annoyed and frustrated scowl on his face. "Crowfeather, what are you doing here?" he asked. I noticed how tired his eyes looked, probably from helping all the clan from anymore oncoming sickness day and night.

"I came to talk to TallStar about something," I said, dragging my paws in the dirt in impatience. I noticed how his whiskers twitched curiously. He looked around for any cats in earshot of our conversation, and then said in a low, cautious voice,"Did you get Midnight's sign, too?" he hissed.

I felt shocked that he also received the sign too. *Well, he* was *a medicine cat after all.* I masked my shock with a blank, neutral expression and nodded. "I assume you were at his den to tell him

the same things that I was going to say about my dream." I meowed in the same low tone.

Barkface sighed in exasperation. "I tried to convince TallStar to come to the meeting at Fourtrees, but wouldn't listen, saying that I needed some rest from my duties and was spouting nonsense." he scowled. His eyes suddenly lit up, as if he got a great idea. "Perhaps you can convince him?" he asked.

I pondered about it for a minute. I could perhaps give it a try. TallStar *was* known for his stubborness, after all. "Sure," I reluctantly agreed. "I just hope he will listen this time," I sighed.

"Thanks," Barkface mewed gruffly. "Let me know how that went. I'd better tend to some cats right now." He looked at the large group of cats gathered around his den. "I hope I still have enough herbs left." he muttered. With a wave of his tail, he padded off to tend to the impatient looking cats.

"Glad I'm not medicine cat," I muttered before sticking my head into his den. "TallStar?" I called. He was laying in his nest; collapsed in exhaustion and grooming his fur. "Come in," he replied.

I hesitantly walked in. He looked up at me, his eyes showing confusion and exhaustion.

"Crowfeather," he said, "Do you need anything?"

"Well..." I didn't know what to say at that moment. "Barkface told me that he told you something, right?" I asked.

TallStar nodded and sighed. "There's no such thing as "a friendly badger giving a message from StarClan." he muttered. "There's a thought that Barkface is getting stressed out from tending to the clan too much these days." he added afterwards.

I just stared at him blankly. "It's true."

He gave me the same blank look. "What? Did Barkface tell you to do this?"

I noticeably tensed. "Kind of," I mewed honestly. "But most of it is

from my own *experience*." I dragged out the last word.

The next few minutes were spent about me spilling out everything I knew about my dream, and Midnight's sign about the meeting at Fourtrees. I added some extra reasons to try to convince him as to why he should go.

When I was done, he was silent for a moment, causing me to tense. *Did I say something wrong?*

He suddenly growled out loud, as if having a bad thought. "WindClan is at its weakest right now," he hissed. "To have the clan see us at Fourtrees would be a blow to our pride."

I was shocked; as this was what he was really thinking about, but I couldn't help but agree with him. WindClan *did* look thin, and were starved from the lack of prey. Even I could notice the bones of my ribs poking out my pelt slightly when I was grooming myself in the morning. "But aren't all the clans at their weakest, too?" I protested. I didn't know why I was wanting to argue with the clan leader, but I also knew that I had to convince him to go to Fourtrees with the others. I sighed darkly. "Don't forget that the Twolegs have been destroying *their* territory too. There have always been four clans, so we also have to help each other in some way. It doesn't matter if we're at our weakest now, but we should go to see what the announcement is going to be." I pleaded. To be honest, I didn't know why I was going this far in order to convince him to go to a meeting in the first place.

His amber eyes clouded in contemplation, and he blinked. "I suppose we should go, too." he finally said, unsure of himself. "We all go tonight." he declared after.

I felt smug of myself for some reason. No matter how ridiculous that seemed. It was probably because I finally managed to convince TallStar over the clan's medicine cat.

"Well then," I coughed, breaking the short stretch of awkward silence between us. "I must take my leave now." I dipped my head down respectfully.

He nodded, signaling my exit. "I'll see you tonight, then, Crowfeather."

"Of course," I muttered, taking my leave.

【☣】【☣】【☣】

"The cats selected for tonight's Gathering at Fourtrees are Crowfeather, Tornear, Onewhisker..." TallStar was saying. I tuned out TallStar's voice as I was deep in my thoughts and questions.

Will the other clans look like WindClan too? Are they also out of prey? Did Squirrelflight and Brambleclaw feel shocked when they saw their clans suffering too? Were there any deaths from starvation, too? These interrogating questions kept bouncing all over my head, and even I wanted to claw my owns ears off from having paranoid thoughts. I just couldn't help but wonder about the other clans too.

"Hey Crowfeather!" a voice yelled, startling me out of my thoughts. "Hurry up! We're going to be leaving soon!" Onewhisker yowled from a few fox-lengths away. He was right. Some of the chosen Warriors were getting ready to leave, while the rest of the cats stayed to guard the camp.

"Oh, it's you," I said boredly under my breath.

"Of course it's me!" he scowled. "Now, let's get going, shall we?"

I rolled my eyes and began to follow the line of cats out of the camp. I looked at my paws and the greenless territory around me. Midway through the long trail to Fourtrees, my mind kept buzzing with questions about more concerns involving the other clans. Right when I felt like I was starting to get paranoid, we arrived at Fourtrees. I sighed in relief and took a look at the other cats already there.

I was extremely shocked to see that they all looked content among themselves, despite the tired, desperate starved looks on their faces. However, I could make out a few grieving looks. *So there* were *deaths among us all*. I thought in grief. *If only none of this would've happened... Things would still be the same as it is now.* I gritted my

teeth as raw fury starting to rise in my stomach. *All of this destruction among the clans had the Twolegs at fault. I can't believe the suffering WindClan had been put through by Twolegs while I was gone.* I growled.

Among looking around at the gathered Warriors, my fury subsided down a bit as my eyes caught on a somewhat pretty light brown tabby sitting next to Cinderpelt, ThunderClan's medicine cat. *She must be Cinderpelt's apprentice*. I thought, catching myself staring intensely at her. Hoping no one saw me, I watched closely as her smooth pelt turned silver in the moonlight, and how her whiskers twitched as she laughed at something Mothwing had said. I blinked. *Snap out of it! She's from another clan* and *a medicine cat for StarClan's sake! I can't be admiring her at a time like this! Wait what? I wasn't admiring her!* I scowled and deadpanned at my ridiculousness. *As if I'd admit that out loud.*

I hurriedly looked up as I heard a loud yowl from LeopardStar, signaling silence among everyone. She coughed and winced as she straightened herself out before sitting on her original spot. "We shall begin the Gathering," she announced. "BlackStar, you may go first."

BlackStar sat up straighter. He looked ghastly troubled by something. "Our territory has been declining ever since the Twolegs came to destroy everything." he growled. "Right now, prey is scarce, but we've managed to somewhat fend." BlackStar coughed. "However, *all* the clans are troubled with the Twolegs. We must come to a final decision quickly before the clans come to be no more."

LeopardStar nodded gravely. Her expression held fury. "Thank you, BlackStar." she faced the audience of cats blankly. "RiverClan is managing to fend for the time-being. However, some got some sicknesses from the weird, sticky puddles found near the Twoleg Monsters..."

I was too much in shock to comprehend the rest that LeopardStar had said. I was starting to wonder about many countless things, especially a specific question that led many questions after. *If they knew that the clans are going to be destroyed if they continued living*

here, then why weren't they making the decision to leave?

I looked back up as I heard countless yowls of agreement around me-mostly from ThunderClan-and saw TallStar about to make his speech. He dipped his head to FireStar respectfully. "I highly agree. Matters will be getting worse soon anyways." He coughed; the clans' expressions facing towards his direction, and once again, I zoned out, hearing some words that made sense now and then.

Lately, I've noticed mostly everyone has been discussing leaving our territories for the sake of our clans. However, some others have been stubborn enough as to actually believe that they had a chance of surviving-but in different ways. In my opinion, I had to say I agreed with the first decision. If the clans died out from just stubborn decisions, the Warrior Code, rituals, and StarClan would forever be forgotten in the history of us Warriors. And I know that some of us realize that too.

【☣】【☣】【☣】

"I loved you, Crowfeather." Feathertail gasped for air. As each passing second went by, the light from her eyes dimmed and became cloudy, reflecting the sky overhead. "...I'm sorry... The thing that makes me sad is that I will no longer walk by your side." I could the faint sadness in her eyes. "Promise me that you'll forget about me," she pleaded. "I would only add more sadness to your life. Become a great Warrior, and find a mate that you will love and replace me, who left a hole in your heart."

"No!" I yowled, jerking suddenly from my sleep. I sighed in relief, realizing that was a dream. Lately I've been dreaming of the same scene of Feathertail over and over again, only adding to my guilt. But in these past few days, it had been getting worse and worse that I was beginning to question my sanity. Unfortunately, I could never forget it, no matter what I tried.

I nearly jumped out of my pelt when there was a rustling noise beside me. "What's up with all the noise?" Webfoot grumbled. "Bad dream?" He groggily asked.

"Y-Yeah..." I replied. *What should I do? Webfoot is scary when someone wakes him up...*

He sighed. "Shut up and get some sleep.." He muttered before he dozed off again.

When I saw he was asleep again, I sighed in relief and lay my head on my paws. Dreams like that were never meant to be forgotten in a day or so. I closed my eyes. I might as well get some sleep in the meantime.

But what I didn't know was that the peace was not going to last.

I was woken by a loud, panicked yowl coming from outside. "Everyone! Wake up! The Monsters-Th-They're destroying the camp!"

I immediately sprung to my paws in alert, and glanced up at the sky. It seemed to be around sunrise now. The Dawn Patrol must've left by now. I quickly turned around to look at the other Warriors, and saw they had the same alert look on their faces. Webfoot was the fastest to gather his senses, and hurriedly pushed past me to see what all the commotion was about. He paused midway, and looked back at us. "Well, what're you standing around for? Hurry up and help the others!"

The others, along with myself, regained our senses and began to help the others escape. I could smell the thick scent of the Twoleg Monsters-except they were closer to the camp than before. Out in the distance, I could make out their claws tearing apart the shrubs, bushes, and thick undergrowth near the camp entrance. There were a few Twolegs barking out orders at the others.

I panicked in realization, my heart beating heavily. *How were we going to get the clan evacuated if they're going to block the entrance?* I took deep, calming breaths. Now wasn't the time to panic. I looked over the crowd of petrified cats, all ranging from different ranks, and noticed that the Elders hadn't been notified yet. I was about to start running towards their den, but a certain Warrior blocked my way and prevented me from going any further.

"Go with the others," Torner ordered. "No objections. I will get the Elders myself. It would be better for you to escape while you still had time." He looked dead-serious, and I was going to escape until I

saw the fierce look in his eyes. "Go!" He said once more, and I was separated from him, now following the crowd out into the open.

"Everyone, over here!" Called Robinwing over the growls of the Monster, its sounds now rumbling in my ears loudly. At the front, she was leading them to safety away from the destruction. TallStar was standing by her right flank, in silence. For a split-second I glanced to my left, and was shocked to see a Monster a few fox-lengths away, moving slowly towards us. The others seemed to realize this too; pushing each other with a fearful look in their eyes. I ran with them, nearing the edge of WindClan's border with ThunderClan.

"Wait!" Someone shouted. "Do we really need to take shelter in ThunderClan's territory? WindClan would appear to be weakened!" They protested.

"That doesn't matter now!" Robinwing growled. "We are all weakened by the scarcity of prey, and our clans are at stake! Now follow or stay behind with the Twoleg Monsters!"

We were starting to near ThunderClan's camp entrance, and among the thick undergrowth, I could hear the faint sounds of cats preparing for the long day ahead of them.

About to enter their camp, we were stopped by Sootfur about to make his way out. He stopped in his tracks and stared at us in shock for a moment. Sootfur coughed. "What business do you have with ThunderClan?" He asked calmly.

Robinwing and TallStar stared at him with hard expressions. In the longest period of silence, TallStar finally spoke up. "We need to speak with FireStar. Can you bring us to him?"

Sootfur dipped his head, seeming to hesitate a little. "I'll see what I can do." He said, starting to pad off to report to FireStar. He paused midway, clearly unsure of his actions. "WindClan can all come in the camp. Don't try anything." He ordered before walking off again.

Tallstar nodded, before motioning at us with his tail to follow. As we walked in, I saw some Warriors look our way, having distrustful

and suspicious looks. The apprentices stared at us with curious eyes, and the Elders started to gossip, glancing at WindClan now and again. I looked down at my paws, not wanting to make any uneccesary eye contact with any of them. On the inside, I was full with anxiety.

I looked up and saw Firestar making his way towards us, his deputy Brambleclaw at his side. He paused in front of Tallstar, standing proudly with an emotionless expression. But among those, I could see the tired look in his eyes and the ribs sticking through his pelt, obviously starving. "Tallstar, what matters bring you here to ThunderClan?"

Tallstar noticeably tensed up, unsure of how to respond. After a moment, he straightened up and dipped his head to Firestar while everyone around us stood shocked. I stared at him with widened eyes. Tallstar was a proud leader. He never bowed down to anyone lower than him, but this sight made him seem even less proud than he usually was. I scowled. Right now he was doing it for the sake of WindClan.

FireStar stood there surprised, opening his jaws in a moment of trying to find words to respond. Tallstar looked ashamed of himself with his ears flattened, but his eyes looked determined. "Please." He pleaded. "Help WindClan by providing us with shelter and prey for the time-being. The Twolegs have started to destroy our camp, and we have no where else to go. I beg of you for the sake of WindClan." He continued to bow down, looking more desperate as more time passed. Finally, Firestar cleared his throat.

"There's no need for you to continue bowing down to me," he said. "I understand that these times are very hard for surviving with all the destruction around us, but I'd be willing to help out an old friend of mine." Firestar's eyes were sincere with his every word.

Tallstar looked back up, clearly shocked at the ginger tom's decision to help WindClan. "Thank you." He purred. "Thank you for your considerate decision."

"Anything to help an old friend," Firestar repeated his previous words. He turned to Brambleclaw. "Please show them around."

Brambleclaw nodded and motioned with his head for us to follow him. We were heading towards Sunningrocks. "We don't really have any place for you all to sleep," he began. "But this will do for now. If you don't feel comfortable, you could always find somewhere else to sleep." He paused. "We don't have enough prey for everyone, so you will have to deal with it for now. And lastly, you can go talk with everyone else if you want." He concluded, nodding towards the group of ThunderClan cats watching us. "I'll be leaving now, but ask someone if you need something."

I watched his retreating back for a while before occasionally looking at the group of WindClan cats. They just sat there and had hushed conversations, not turning to talk to the ThunderClan cats. I sighed, and looked around awkwardly, bored out of my mind. But that was until an overly-excited ginger apprentice bounced over to me. "Crowpaw!" yowled Squirrelpaw. *I really had to get used to be called that... "*What?" I answered in annoyance.

She huffed. "No need to be so rude! I was just wanting to talk for a while!" She scowled.

I mentally groaned. *She could be annoying at times when she needed to be.*

"Well anyways, what happened? What did the Monsters do? How many were there?" She interrogated me.

I scowled. "Stop with all the annoying questions. It was a life-or-death situation back there! It's not like the clan benefitted off anything of it!" I snapped.

Squirrelpaw scowled angrily. "I was just-!"

"Actually, Crow*paw* here helped the clan a lot," Tornear cut in our argument, adding emphasis on the 'paw.' "He caught enough prey to feed almost all of the clan!" He boasted with a hint of pride in his voice.

I felt my ears grow hot with embarrassment. "It was nothing," I said coolly. "I was just doing what any other cat would do."

Tornear purred in amusement. "Don't be so full of yourself, Crowpaw. I know you wanted to boast."

"No, I-!"

This time, *I* was cut off by Tornear when he heard a cat call his name. "Oh, looks like I'd better go. For now, relax a bit." He said reassuringly before he left.

I let out an exasperated sigh and turned back to Squirrelpaw. She looked annoyed that I was being praised more than her. "Hmm, looks like I benefitted the clan more than you!" I smirked smugly in a playful manner.

"Y-You!"

I drowned out her annoying shouts of protest by looking out in the distance at Firestar and Tallstar. They seemed to be in a heated discussion, and I could somewhat hear what they were saying.

"We have to leave our territories someday soon," Firestar said darkly. "The Twolegs will still continue to destroy our territories until there is nothing left."

Tallstar nodded in agreement. "It's better to leave earlier, so more cats won't die from starvation."

"We should," Firestar started. "But we'll leave after we wait for the other two clans-ShadowClan and RiverClan. I just hope that they aren't *that* foolish to think that we all still have a chance of surviving somehow. After all, they've seen what the Twolegs and Monsters could do."

Tallstar held a grave expression. "I hope so too. But, I think we should leave right away before we all soon starve."

Before I could see Firestar's reply, I turned back to Squirrelpaw, and saw that she was eavesdropping on their conversation and watching their heated agreements too.

"We're leaving soon, huh..." She muttered. "I'm not sure if I'm ready.." Squirrelpaw looked troubled; after all, it was hard to leave

your birthplace.

I realized that I didn't think of this before. *Did I think I was ready to leave my territory and birthplace-where I made so much memories? It was special to me somehow. But most importantly of all, was it okay to betray Feathertail by leaving her memories that I shared with her behind too?*

Chapter 4

I didn't know why, but for the rest of the day, I felt an uneasy feeling in my chest. It was like a sorrowful burden that was almost the same as carrying the troubles of the whole forest on my shoulders. I had a hinting suspicion that it was the gult of leaving behind the memories that I shared with Feathertail, but it could've been my own longing too. I shook my head, looking down at my paws. I shouldn't think too much on this.

I walked over to Brambleclaw and Squirrelpaw, who seemed to be in a heated argument. I inwardly sighed in exasperation, and stood awkwardly next to them, each not making a move to acknowledge me. Lately those two have been fighting a lot recently that it was starting to get on my nerves.

"We *have to* leave right away! Go and convince Firestar to hurry up!" she hissed.

"But we can't-at least not without the other clans too!" he hissed back.

"Who cares about waiting for them! Why don't we go over to their territory and convince them! The sake of their clans and lives are at risk by the Twolegs right now. If you think you should continue to let them believe this and then get killed off, then what was the use of not doing anything to help them at all?!"

Brambleclaw looked shocked by her choice of words. He opened his mouth to say something but then closed it, speechless.

Squirrelpaw looked at him with a smug and annoyed expression, and then scowled, running off.

"Squirrelpaw!" Brambleclaw yowled. He sighed, wearing the same exasperated look on his face like mine. It was finally then that the ignorant furball *finally* noticed me. "I wasn't intruding or anything, was I?" I meowed coolly. I couldn't be all friendly with him when

there were other cats watching our exchange, after all.

He seemed to realize the same thing when he replied in the same cold manner. "No, Squirrelpaw's just being hard to deal with... Well, she always is, anyways." he sighed. "She tried to get Firestar to agree to convince the other clans too, but unfortunately that didn't work. Now she's been trying to get *me* to convince him..."

I could feel his exasperation. She was starting to get on my nerves on the journey to the Tribe, too. I once again felt that dread. *The Tribe of Rushing Water...* I felt like I was being cut open when I recalled the sorrowful memories. I was about to reply, but that was cut short when I heard a loud crash and rumbling somewhere near ThunderClan's border, along with a barely audible yowl farther away. We glanced at each other, our eyes reflecting one another's panic.

It seemed like everyone else heard the sound too. Warriors from both WindClan and ThunderClan began pushing each other in order to see what all the commotion was outside the camp. I had to admit that I was also curious, but I didn't want to get caught up in the crowd.

It was until a loud yowl gathered everyone's senses back together, and they immediately froze and perked up at the cat. Firestar was standing in front of them calmly; Sandstorm and Graystripe standing by his sides. He faced the crowd of cats more clearly, and I could see the alarmed look in his eyes. "I know you all are curious as to where the crash came from, but it's no use if everyone pushes one another to see." He paused to look around at the ThunderClan Warriors. "Sandstorm, Graystripe, Dustpelt, Foxleap, Sorreltail, Squirrelpaw, and Brambleclaw will come with me. We may need more cats to help, so come with us if you feel like you can help." He turned his attention towards the WindClan cats. "You all don't have to come if you don't want to, but you may be needed at the camp, too." He added before they rushed out the entrance.

I stood there looking out at their departure for a moment, before I began making my way to follow too.

"Crowpaw!" a voice prevented me from going any further. I

stiffened, grumbling to myself about why they had to come at *this* important time.

Tornear looked grave. "If you're going, I'm coming with you." He said in a dismissive tone that left no room for arguments.

I stared at him with a shocked expression. I expected him to fight back and prevent me from following the patrol, but I guess he had different intentions.

"We'd better hurry up. Someone could be in danger as we wait."

"Yeah, let's go," I said in a cool tone. *I'd never seen this side of Tornear before, but I'm actually glad he's being cooperative for once.*

We both ran out the entrance and followed the scent of Firestar and his patrol to the border into ShadowClan territory. From afar, I could hear the rumbling of what seemed to be like the Monsters along with the panicked yowls of cats. It didn't even take a moment of hesitation before we rushed in, ignoring the acrid scent of the Monsters and swampy smell of ShadowClan's territory. From ahead, multiple crashes were heard; some trees falling down and causing the ground to rumble beneath my paws. Running faster, I ran into a fern tunnel-Tornear behind me-and arrived at the scene of destruction in front of me.

It was chaos. Cats of all ranks-Warriors, Elders, Queens, Kits-were running around, trying to escape from the trees overhead that fell. From nearby, Firestar was escorting some Elders while the rest were in disarray, giving out orders in panicked tones. I was so deep in thought that I didn't notice a spotted golden tabby push past me into the camp with a patrol.

"If you have time to stand around and watch, go and help." Leopardstar meowed curtly. "I heard the commotion here from my camp." I noticed she looked exhausted and deprived of food judging from the way her ribs stuck out. Her patrol looked the same way too; matted fur and exhausted looks. *Have the Monsters' destruction taken a greater toll on everyone than I had thought?*

"I'll help." Tornear said coolly aside me. *I had almost forgot he was*

here...

Leopardstar said nothing but gave a curt nod. Mistyfoot dipped her head in acknowledgement before trodding with her and the rest, Tornear trailing behind.

I didn't know what to do except stand there and watch in helplessness as cats dodged falling pieces of trees and rocks in their desperation for survival with the Monsters only a few fox-lengths away.

The world froze around me as the blood in my ears rushed faster and my paws stayed stiff. There was a lump in my throat, and I felt a wave of hopelessness rush over me. *Compared to the rest of the world, right now we look so tiny.* I came to the sinking realization. At this moment, death was weighing on each cats' shoulders. The darkness just watched us flail around in this case of hopelessness as we continue struggling to fight.

Glimpses of Sharptooth and Feathertail's fight suddenly flashed through my mind. I shut my eyes tightly, trying to forget myself about the events for the moment. *What will become of me if memories of the guilt I carry keep haunting me?*

I grit my teeth, forcing a paw to move forward. I kept telling myself the opposite of this each day, but I guess I was wrong. *I would never forget.*

My paws pushed me forward and I blocked out the sights around me as I started to head for an opening between the trees to the Thunderpath. I couldn't stay still any longer.

"Crowpaw!" Ignoring the yowls behind me, I pushed myself more as I reached the edge of the Thunderpath. The paws of two cats thundered from behind me as I tried to escape their grasps. I could see the lights of the Monster from my left as it neared me. I shut my eyes as I waited for the impact, but it never came as I felt myself being tackled back onto safe territory by a ginger she-cat.

A paw scuffed my ear. I scowled up at Brambleclaw. "Are you mouse-brained?" He hissed. "What did you think you were doing,

running onto the Thunderpath recklessly like that?!"

"Crowpaw, come to your senses!" Squirrelpaw interrogated. "Why were you doing this?!"

I was silent for a moment before I responded in a cold, monotonous tone. "I'm not afraid of dying as long as Feathertail is waiting for me in StarClan."

Brambleclaw and Squirrelpaw stared at me in shocked silence. I could understand why they were surprised. After all, I basically said I loved a cat from another clan.

Brambleclaw let out a long sigh. "I know why you're thinking that, because anyone else who lost someone they loved would think this way too. However, the actions you took were wrong."

I was surprised, but masked my expression with the same coldness I always seemed to bore.

Squirrelpaw stepped in. "Would Feathertail be happy that you're still being haunted by her memories she wanted you to get over?" She said. "I'm sure that she wouldn't want you to feel sad because of her. After all, it's no use dwelling in the past forever. You must move on, even if it pains you to do so." she said emotionlessly. *This isn't the Squirrelpaw I usually see...* I thought. *At this moment, she almost looks like Firestar.*

I looked at my paws guiltily as my mouse-brained actions finally registered in my mind. I didn't know why those thoughts had such a huge impact on my actions. But I'm actually glad they told me straight-out instead. It took a bigger toll on me than I'd expected.

Brambleclaw turned around and started to head back. Squirrelpaw followed suit. "I can't believe you can be this stupid to be so reckless." She added on and sighed. "Let's head back." Squirrelpaw continued trodding behind Brambleclaw.

I guess she's right. I thought as I followed them back. *But no way in Starclan will I ever tell her that.*